

Voyageurs — A Boater's Park

With over 80,000 acres of water, **Voyageurs National Park is a boater's paradise.** This is a unique park. With fewer than 10 miles of roads, visitors must leave their cars behind for a motorboat, tourboat (see page 3), canoe, houseboat, kayak or sailboat to truly experience the park.

With increased numbers and types of boats in park waters, it is even more important to be courteous to your fellow visitors.

- Powerboats give canoes and kayaks a broad berth; wakes from your vessel may swamp paddlers.



- Canoes and kayaks can be difficult to see and should avoid using the main channels.
- Motorized and nonmotorized vessels launch at the same locations. Please watch out for each other.
- Paddlers should observe the angle of a motorboat's bow – the driver may not see you.



Do You Know Where Your Lifejacket Is?

Always wear your life jacket – it won't work unless you wear it. Minnesota state law requires all watercraft, including canoes and kayaks, to have one wearable U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device (PFD) on board and readily accessible for each person in the watercraft.



Navigation You Need to Know

The U.S. Coast Guard Buoy System: The Coast Guard numbered red and green buoy system is used to guide boaters and mark hazards (see below). To use this system you need to know the direction of lake flow. Namakan, Sand Point and Crane lakes all flow north or downlake toward Kettle Falls. Kabetogama Lake flows east or downlake to Namakan and Kettle Falls. Rainy Lake flows west or downlake to International Falls. **Remember red buoys to your right while traveling uplake (red right return).**

3 Can buoys are green with odd numbers. Keep them to the left when going uplake.

5 MPH Circled mark means a controlled area. It may carry a speed limit, for example.

2 Nun buoys are red with even numbers. Keep them to the right when going uplake.

Divers flag warns of the presence of divers, who may be just under the surface.

Diamond shape warns of danger. **Cross in diamond** means boats must keep out.

Safe Boating Checklist

- ☐ A wearable life preserver readily accessible for each person
- ☐ Navigation lights at night
- ☐ Fire extinguisher
- ☐ Whistle or horn
- ☐ Navigational maps
- ☐ Anchor, paddles or oars, and lines
- ☐ Spare propeller and shear pin
- ☐ Flashlight and first aid kit
- ☐ Type IV throwable cushion or ring

Reminders...

Don't overload the boat.
All passengers should stay seated or within boat while boat is moving.
Watch the weather — get off the lake during thunderstorms.
Watch for hypothermia from cold water and wind.
Know where you can refuel.
Avoid prolonged exposure.
BOAT SOBER — operating a boat under the influence of drugs or alcohol is illegal.

Things to Know

National park rangers enforce a wide spectrum of federal laws and regulations and a variety of state statutes. Familiarize yourself with park rules.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

- Destroying or collecting natural and cultural resources of the park, including cutting live trees, harassing wildlife and collecting any natural or cultural resources except berries and nuts, is prohibited.
- **Don't drink and drive!** Operating a boat or snowmobile while under the influence of drugs or alcohol is prohibited.
- **Public use closures:** Check at visitor centers and boat ramp bulletin boards for areas closed for protection of visitors or park resources. Closed areas are posted with signs.
- Hunting is not allowed in the park.
- Firearms, fireworks, and archery equipment are prohibited. Chain saws are prohibited except for cutting ice-fishing holes.
- Private floatplanes are allowed on the four major lakes — Rainy, Kabetogama, Namakan, and Sand Point. They are also allowed on Locator, War Club, Quill, Loiten, Shoepack, Mukooda, and Little Trout Lakes.
- **Know Canadian fishing and customs regulations** before you cross the border – (807) 274-3655.
- **Pets** are allowed in developed areas, around visitor centers, boat ramps, picnic areas, and tent, houseboat, and day use sites on the four main lakes. They must be restrained on a leash not more than 6' long and under your control. **Pets are not allowed on park trails or in the backcountry.**
- **Quiet Time** — Parkwide 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.
- **Anglers know the slot!** If you plan to fish in the park get a copy of the 2003 Minnesota Fishing Regulations at area



businesses and visitor centers. A Minnesota fishing license is required to fish in the park. Know the slot limit (size limit) for the lakes where you will be fishing. Park rangers enforce Minnesota state fishing regulations.

- **Use steel sinkers instead of lead, which can poison loons.**
- **Catch and release fishing**
 - Play, unhook, and release fish quickly
 - Don't rub off protective slime
 - Needle nose pliers speed up hook removal
 - Handle fish firmly, but gently, never by eye sockets
 - Keep fish in the water to the greatest extent possible
 - If gut hooks, cut line and release



National Park Service Artist-in-Residence Program:

Voyageurs National Park invites professional artists to stay at the park for two weeks in order to interpret the park through art. Applications for residencies are open to two-dimension visual artists, photographers, sculptors, performers, writers, video/filmmakers and composers. When: August, two weeks. How: application deadline February 15. **Contact Artist-in-Residence Coordinator at 218-283-9821.**

Do you want to work for Voyageurs National Park?

The National Park Service hires many seasonal employees throughout the year. Applicants may apply to specific announcements posted on the internet at www.usajobs.opm.gov or www.sep.nps.gov or by contacting the Human Resources Office at Voyageurs National Park, 3131 Highway 53, International Falls, MN 56649 or at (218) 283-9821.

***Please don't drink and drive...
...a car!
...a boat!
...a snowmobile!***

Last year two people died in Voyageurs National Park. Both deaths were caused by drinking and driving and speeding — one in a boat and one on a snowmobile. Both deaths could have been prevented.

We need your help to make Voyageurs a safe place to visit. The alcohol limits and laws that apply to automobile drivers are the same for operators of boats and snowmobiles. ***Come to Voyageurs to enjoy the scenery and recreation, not to risk your life.***

